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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a collaboration between a college, three public school districts, and an American Indian school, all with high American Indian populations, to increase the number of American Indian teachers. Project goals were to: (1) develop programs to facilitate the professional preparation of American Indian instructional aides to become teachers, who could then become positive role models for students; and (2) help candidates understand and address unique problems confronting American Indian students. Data come from evaluations of the Knight Scholar Program at Heritage College in Toppenish, Washington. Researchers collected information via interviews with Knight Scholars for over 5 years. Results indicate that the program was successful in its goals. Participants considered themselves transformed by the experience, believed they gained confidence in their own expertise, and were determined to make a difference. They considered themselves important role models for American Indian students and felt better prepared to bridge the cultural gap between school and community. They expressed concern about alcoholism, drugs, dropping out, gang activities among youth, and preservation of their native language and culture. They were committed to the concept that American Indian people must provide leadership in American Indian education. (Contains 23 references.) (SM)

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FROM ASPIRANT TO PROFESSIONAL: THE TRANSFORMATION OF AMERICAN INDIANS WHO WOULD BE TEACHERS. RESULTS OF A FIVE-YEAR ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

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Running Head: Aspirant to Professional

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The first day of school.

My friend Judéwin knew a few words of English and had overheard the woman talking about cutting our long hair. Our mothers had taught us that only warriors who were captured had their hair shingled by the enemy. Among our people short hair was worn by mourners, and shingled hair by cowards.

I resisted by kicking and scratching wildly. I was carried downstairs, and tied fast to a chair.

I cried aloud, shaking my head until I felt the cold blades of the scissors and heard them gnaw off one of my thick braids. Then I lost my spirit. Since I had been taken from my mother, I had suffered extreme indignities. People had stared at me. I had been tossed in the air like a wooden puppet. And now my long hair was being shingled like a coward's. I moaned for my mother, but no one came to comfort me. For now I was only one of many little animals driven by a herder.

- Zitkala-Sa

Yankton Sioux
1884

Introduction

There seems little likelihood that the demographics of the K-12 teaching force will change in the very near future from its present eighty or more percent configuration of White, middle class females. While all may be dedicated teachers of the increasingly diverse children in the nation's schools, teachers from this cultural background are challenged in fully understanding and working effectively to assure success for all students. Of children at risk in the public schools, those of American Indian heritage are in egregious peril due to high dropout rates, intergenerational trauma and school systems that are antithetical to their cultural norms and ways of knowing.

The purpose of this project was to create collaboration between one college, three public school districts and one American Indian school, all with high percentages of American Indian children, to increase the number of American Indian teachers. The project's objectives were to: (1) develop programs to facilitate the professional preparation of current Native American instructional aides to become teachers, who could then serve as positive role models for their pupils and (2) to assist candidates in understanding and addressing the unique problems confronting Native American students in K-12 settings.

Schools and teachers are clearly not reaching a large number of these students, who face bleak futures with limited economic and quality of life opportunities. The estimates of American Indian students who drop out of school vary from 40-60 percent depending on tribal affiliation.

In the past, blame for academic failure of American Indian students was ascribed to their families, their cultures, and/or their low socioeconomic status. The process of deculturalization has had profoundly negative effects creating dysfunctional environments for generations of American Indian children (Cajete, 1994; Nieto, 1995). Schooling has frequently overlooked the integrity of American Indian children's cultural values and practices in both thought and behavior (Collins, 1994). Social structures, learning styles and communication processes in schools have been inconsistent with cultural norms in most Native American societies (Pai, 1990).

It is the authors' position that while American Indian students have been traditionally required to adapt to "white" ways for school success, this expectation in actuality is unrealistic. While it makes more sense for teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to the populations with whom they work, having teachers from Native cultures portends even greater hope for academic success. Yet, college campuses have not been friendly to those American Indian people who have entered post-secondary education (Barone, 1994; Tierney, 1991). Consequently, many aspiring American Indian students have failed in their efforts to achieve baccalaureates; with the exemption of an exceptional few in enlightened programs such as those at Dartmouth (Garrod & Larrimore, 1997) or tribal colleges (Noriega, 1992). Themselves the victims of multigenerational trauma, many American Indian college students might have benefited from teaching/learning strategies addressing the special needs of at-risk Indian children and youth (Bentro, Broken Leg, and Van Bockern, 1990; Pewewardy, 1997).

The Study

The following is the result of a compilation of data from the evaluations of the Knight Scholar Program at Heritage College in Toppenish, Washington. The information was collected by utilizing ethnographic means in the form of interviews with Knight Scholars over the length of five years.

The significance of this research is that it chronicles an on-going dialog between two distinct cultural groups: Native Americans who wanted to become certified teachers and faculty in the Division' of Education and Psychology who wanted to find ways of making higher education accessible for Native Americans enrolled in their programs. This on-going dialog took the form of a "dance" between participants, a performance if you will, which was being choreographed along the way. Evaluations at key periods during the length of the program allowed for subtle and not-so subtle program shifts to be made to allow the dance to evolve into a beautifully articulated performance. Heritage College can now replicate this performance piece so that future American Indians can achieve their goals of completing degrees in higher education.

Background

The Knight Scholar Foundation Program was created at Heritage College as a way of addressing the lack of Native American teachers in the public and private schools in the vicinity of Toppenish, Washington, and on the Yakama Nation Reservation. Para-professionals who were members of the Yakama Nation or who had American Indian/Hispanic heritage were asked to join this special pilot project. When the program began, it was not known what influences would make a difference for the success of this program. The individuals involved were very traditional and had dropped out of other colleges for various reasons. In order to understand the success of the program, it is necessary to understand ingredients which led to its success.

The College is located on the grounds of the Yakama Nation Reservation on land allocated by the Tribal Business Council for this purpose. Part of the agreement for the location of the college on tribal land was to provide access to higher education to members of the Yakama Nation. The college is less than nineteen years old, and has as one of its primary objectives the increase in knowledge of diversity as well as increased enrollment of members of ethnically diverse populations in its programs.

Of the twenty-three (23) individuals who were enrolled in the program, twenty-one (21) completed their degrees in education. This represents a 91% graduation rate (Klug, 1999). When these same students had attempted to pursue higher education previously, they were unable to do so. Challenges identified by the students in completing their degrees included alienation from their families and cultures, an inability to understand the "White" system of schooling, involvement in alcohol or other drugs, and a feeling of being "looked down on" by their professors (Klug, 1995).

The ability to succeed at Heritage College was the result of many different factors. Those factors can be categorized as (a) personal changes and (b) institutional changes. Through interviews which took place during the course of five years of the program,

participants gave insights into the cultural differences between Native societies and the macro-society, which made it difficult for the Scholars to succeed in their programs. After receiving the results of each evaluation, the staff at Heritage College took the recommendations made by the evaluator and made suggested changes which would enhance the opportunities for success of the Knight Scholars (Klug, 1995; Klug, 1996; Klug, 1997; and Klug, 1999).

The results of interviews categorizing difficulties encountered by Scholars and changes made by them and Heritage College to overcome those difficulties is presented below. However, to realize the significance of these results an understanding of Native American cultural differences is needed first.

World views and their affectss on success in academic settings

The world of American Indian peoples is multidimensional: the spiritual (social), physical, cognitive (mental), and emotional areas of life are all interrelated (Pewewardy, 1999). In other words, what happens in one area of life affects the totality of one's life. For instance, the ability to succeed educationally may be enhanced by one's spirituality. If there is disruption in the emotional area, this will inadvertedly reflect on the individual in the other three areas. What is beneficial in the physical area will provide benefits in the other areas as well. It is crucial for a healthy individual to maintain balance in all areas of life. To be healthy is not just the responsibility of the body; one must be healthy in the spiritual, emotional, and cognitive realms, also.

The Native American perception of how life is to be lived qualifies as a *relational* world view as opposed to a *linear* world view (Cross, 1995). According to Cross (1995), the relational view explains one's world in terms of four quadrants: Mind, Body, Spirit, and Context (see Figure 1). These areas are represented in the form of a circle, indicating the wholeness of one's being. We find intellect, emotion, memory, judgement, and experience in the Mind segment; the Body contains the physical elements related to one's health and stamina as well as support from the family and kinship structures; the Spirit area holds one's relationship with the Creator, spiritual rituals and teachings, special dreams and gifts one has received from protecting forces; the Context area contains community, family interdependency as well as resiliency, culture, and the larger society.

Insert Figure 1 about here

These four areas are in a constant state of flux as people travel on their life's journeys. For instance, if the **Body** is not well, this may affect abilities to participate in special religious community rituals, then affecting feelings of "connectedness" with the Creator **(Spirit)**. The area of **Mind** may then affected because people do not have the opportunity to record important ritual events in schemata, or perhaps to learn the significance of rituals or how to perform rituals for community members **(Context)**.

Therefore the goal for indigenous peoples is to maintain a healthy balance among all of these four areas in order to function harmoniously.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, the world view practiced by Western or European society is a linear world view. The linear world view is one of cause and effect (Cross, 1995). For instance, the effect of being physically unwell has a distinct cause, such as being exposed to a particular virus. The condition of one's spiritual or social well-being is not considered; treatment for the illness is treatment of the body alone. In this perception of the world, an individual is not expected to reflect on the balance present in his or her life. Physical illness is seen as affecting the area of **Body** in isolation.

The Medicine Wheel, referred to often by Native Americans, reflects the relational world view as practiced by indigenous peoples of the Americas (See Figure 2). It should be noted that there are slight variations between the Medicine Wheel (Pewewardy, 1998) and Cross's (1995) concept of the relational world view. ("Medicine" should not be confused with pharmaceuticals. The original indigenous word was pronounced similarly to /medicine/, therefore this is the word chosen by those who made early contact with Native peoples to describe the concept.).

In traditional Native societies, "medicine" refers to whatever is necessary to assist people in balancing all areas of their lives. This may be referred to as "maintaining balance" or "harmony", or "walking in beauty" (Diné). In a similar vein, a "Medicine Bundle" does not contain pharmaceuticals, but special objects representative of spiritual helpers, special powders from nature, or objects with special significance to the individual. With the Medicine Wheel, the **Mental** area encompasses what is referred to by Cross as "Mind"; the **Spiritual** area encompasses Cross' "Spirit" and "Context" (the Spiritual informs people of how they are to interact with others; it represents, in effect, the code of ethics); the **Physical** area encompasses Cross' "Body" with dimensions included by Cross (1995) within "Context"; and the area of **Emotional** is considered separately as opposed to Cross' (1995) inclusion of emotion within the area of "Mind".

Insert Figure 2 about here

It should be noted that there may be variations among different tribal entities as to what constitutes each area of the Medicine Wheel and the colors chosen to represent the Four Directions. The terms "Four Grandfathers" and "Four Winds" are also descriptors used for what is represented on the Medicine Wheel. The Wheel can be shown with directions represented as done with the Compass Rose, or with the middle forming an "x" instead of a "+" (See Figure 3). However represented, the Medicine Wheel serves as a powerful reminder to Native peoples about the importance of how to live in the "right way" (Whitfield and Klug, 2000).

Insert Figure 3 about here

Barriers to Success in the Macro-culture of the United States

Encounters with Europeans by indigeous peoples

From the earliest encounters with the Spanish, the Americas were looked upon as a place filled with treasure ripe for plunder (Fixico,1998). Treasure was not intended to remain in the Americas, but was to be transferred back to Europe for the enrichment of the European ruling houses and the persons "in charge" of acquiring the riches from Natives. Europeans were not above killing Natives in order to attain their goals, as demonstrated by the actions of Christopher Columbus and those who followed in his wake (Verrill, 1954).

The Catholic church also saw the Americas as a place for new religious converts. As such, these individuals needed to be re-educated in order for their souls to be "saved". Re-education entailed abolishing older forms of religious practices and replacing them with Christian ones. Therefore the Catholic church commissioned missionaries from various religious orders to sail to the Americas for the purposes of establishing the Church in these newly "discovered" lands (Dozier, 1966).

The first Europeans to arrive on the Eastern shores of North America were either adventureers or those in search of a "safe haven" where they would be able to live without fear of religious persecution. These people were received well by the Native population (Berkhofer, 1979). However, less scrupulous Europeans perceived in the Americas opportunity to appropriate "free" land and subsequent wealth without regard for the Native population. By disregarding the level and kinds of development of Native cultures, these people justified taking property from "less developed" indigenous peoples as a God-given right. Portrayed as savages, the indigeous populations of Native Americans were reduced to less than human status (Berkhofer, 1979).

In his book, Native American testimonials: An anthology of Indian and White relations, first encounter to dispossession, Nabovkov (1978) chronicles the European migration to America and the devastating effects upon the Native population. Original documents of American Indian oral and written testimony from the first dream predictions of the White Man's coming through disposition of the land, treaty-making, resistance, forced marches off aboriginal lands, and Chief Joseph's surrender (the last surrender of American Indian tribes), are recorded here. Accounts tell of the efforts of Natives to live in harmony with two completely different philosophical views toward life and the land: one of possession and one of husbandry. Of all the factors which impacted the Native population, disease was one of the most formidable, killing millions of people. In addition, alcohol played a role in devastating the tribal communities. In 1754, King Haglar of the Catawba tribe addressed the South Carolina authorities. He petitioned them to stop serving alcoholic beverages to his people, stressing the negative effects of alcohol upon his people (Hagler, 1978).

The myth of the "Vanishing Indian" became prevalent by the end of the 19th century. Due to the decimation of the indigenous population from disease, alcoholism, social dysfunction, moving populations onto reservations with poor conditions for survival, and

intermarriage with White and African-American populations, it appeared to demographers that the existence of Native Americans was in serious jeopardy. For those individuals who survived, it was thought the only way to succeed in the macro-society was to become completely assimilated, i.e., in effect to become "White" (Spring, 1994).

Boarding schools were established in the late 1800's and run along military lines as determined by Col. Pratt at the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania (Spring, 1995). Col. Pratt would not allow American Indian students to speak their native languages or to retain any of their native practices. He believed that in order for American Indian people to survive, they had to become "civilized", i.e., become acculturated to Western society and ways of thinking. There were several dire consequences as a result of this effort. Of special significance were the death rates of children exposed to European diseases and from living indoors as opposed to their traditional involvement in the world of nature. These children were not returned home for burial in sacred ancestral grounds, but in a graveyard at the Carlisle Indian School.

For those children who survived, most were away from their families for several years. Many had no cultural affiliation when they returned to their homes. They were unable to fit into the life of their tribes, and were disassociated from their families and cultures. Basically, they entered a cultural "no man's land" (Lewis, 1994).

As opposed to Euro-Americans with their linear world views where the past is not always connected with the present, what has happened in the past still has an effect upon indigenous peoples in the United States today. Because of the difficulties encountered with the boarding school system, American Indian elders to this day have much resistance to formal education. In addition, many elders are unwilling to "share" their language or to even teach it to the youth, feeling that the language, too, will be taken away (Klug, 1995). The following comment made by an interviewee in 1995 (Klug) exemplifies this view:

> The boarding school provided something to eat and a way to escape some of the responsibilities associated with a large family (for this Scholar). Her mother wanted her to be successful in school and in learning the new ways. Because her mother had attended the boarding school and knew what the experience entailed, she would not teach the native language of Sahaptin to her children.

Broken promises and intergenerational trauma

In trying to understand additional reasons behind the feeling of depression or lack of control over one's destiny, the evaluator for the Knight Scholar Program in 1996 visited the Yakama Cultural Heritage Center. The evaluator was allowed access to the archives section when she asked specifically why there was a feeling of malaise on the Reservation. One of the employees brought her two very thick binders filled with information concerning the tribe and meetings of the tribal council. The researcher was also given a copy of the original treaty which was signed by representatives of the Yakima (spelled "Yakama" now) Nation and the United States Government. The Treaty of 1855 is regarded as a sacred document by the members of the tribe, but it was clear from an examination of the additional documents that this was not the case with the government. In the original treaty, promises were made for land rights, water rights,

health care, education, and monies in return for the land that was being given to the government.

A section of the material especially noted by the assistant covered the minutes of council meetings from the period of the early 1930's through 1946. These writings revealed how the Yakama people were forced to fight for their land, water, fishing rights, and other treaty agreements time and time again (Klug, 1996). Clearly, there has always been a difference in attitudes between the Europeans and Native Americans with regard to land, property, religious values, and work and leisure. The procedure for acquiring land by treaty was begun by Spain "as early as the sixteen century" (Nabokov, 1978, 148). However, this procedure was little understood by the Native peoples, many of whom were not even qualified to sign the treaties for their tribes. In addition, many of the settlers ignored the treaty rights and settled on American Indian land without permission.

According to Horton (1943), when individuals do not feel as if they have control over their lives, "acculturative stress" is likely to result. This may be exhibited in many forms, including abuse of drugs and alcohol. Concern over the lack of respect for elders and the traditions of the culture was expressed time and again over the course of the five years by the Knight Scholars (Klug, 1995; Klug, 1996; Klug, 1997; and Klug, 1999).

Influences of European Society on Indigeous Peoples Today

In addition to the problems created by the presence of alcohol and drugs on or near tribal lands, there are other influences which undermine the indigenous culture of the Yakama people. The encroachment of "White" civilization upon American Indian reservations has had a negative impact on reservation life in the last three decades (Deloria, 1991). There has been a decrease in traditional reliance upon the community as a result of access to the "outside" world through advances in communications. With electricity has come the ability for families to become more nuclear and to utilize their own appliances rather than rely on the community for day to day support. Entertainment is not a communal experience, but that of families observing the fabricated lives of others as presented on the television.

> Age, experience, wisdom, and gender provide no special insights into life; publicity alone provides an individual with the platform from which to speak and endorses whatever the individual represents as a valid interpretation of the world. Thus, a pop singer with a cause is often the public equivalent of cadres of knowledgeable and experienced professionals in a field. When this attitude is transferred to Indian communities, it produces a disdain for elders, a drastic decline in traditional virtues of politeness and gentility, and a tendency to elevate the demagogue to a position of power within the community. This new social mix dominates and controls all action in and by Indian Communities. (Deloria, 1991, p.10)

Methods, Techniques, Modes of Inquiry

The purpose of the study was to determine those factors which contributed to the academic and professional success or failure of more than twenty American Indian teacher education aspirants selected from among paraprofessionals in four (4) cooperating school districts. The student demographics of the four collaborating districts ranged from as low as seven percent to as high as 100 percent American Indian

enrollment. Not less than 90 percent of students in all four districts were classified as low income.

The project to develop the American Indian teachers had three primary strategies: (1) to integrate opportunities for Education majors to investigate the impact of trauma on themselves and their students; (2) to develop opportunities for project participants to put theory into practice in field-based classrooms, and (3) to assist in the development of (a) educational planning, (b) school/college partnerships and (c) setting priorities which encouraged parent-inclusive, culturally appropriate educational programs; tribal language and culture as a responsibility in schooling; more Native Americans becoming professional teachers; and college offerings which facilitate the three foregoing components.

Data Sources

The element of the project described in this presentation concerns the final conclusions of a five-year ethnographic study of the teacher education students in the program, with special emphasis on the conceptual, psychosocial, and professional transformations they experienced as a result of their educational odysseys. Data collection consisted of semi-structured interviews and personal narratives directed at identifying:

- Aspirants' confidence and competence in designing culturally relevant curriculum for K-12 learners
- changes they perceived in their professional working experiences as they progressed through their academic programs
- elements of schooling Aspirants' own experiences indicated which advanced or deterred education compatible with American Indian values
- ways Aspirants' courses of study helped them in their current work as paraprofessionals
- changes Aspirants' perceived in their relationships with their families and communities
- other professional growth opportunities (e.g. conference presentations, committee work) that contributed to Aspirants' sense of professionalism
- personal lifestyle changes that advanced Aspirants' professional growth

and - Aspirants' commitment to the concept that American Indian people must provide the leadership in American Indian education.

Results: The Victorious Successes of the Knight Scholars

An examination of the data compiled from interviews with Native Americans enrolled in the Knight Scholar Program at Heritage College has revealed transformations made on both the part of the students as well as on the part of the College (Klug, 1995; Klug, 1996; Klug, 1997; and Klug, 1999). Key to the success of the Knight Scholars is movement along the continuum from Traditional to Assimilated (See Figure 4). While these Scholars began on the end of the continuum marked Traditional, they were able to make progress to the mid-point of the continuum marked "Bicultural". Many of these

Scholars will not move past this point on the continuum because they value their participation in their native cultures too much to deny their heritage. If they were to do so, they would also destroy their ties to kith and kin. These individuals strongly aspire to be able to function in both worlds, and have demonstrated this is not an impossible goal. These Scholars also provide role models for others in their communities. Their success is testimony that it is possible to "make it" in the macro-society while retaining the Scholars' cultural identities (Klug, 1999).

Insert Figure 4 about here

A crucial development for Knight Scholars was having time to make adjustments needed to enable them to experience academic success. These modifcations came in Scholars' expansion of their understandings of the European world view and procedural knowledge which set the stage for their learning within the academic world. Perhaps the greatest growth made by all of the participants was gaining knowledge of themselves and their cultures and of the European culture. Even those individuals who were more "White" by some standards, such as blood quantum, had still retained native ways of interacting with the world. By learning more about both worlds, they could understand differences which led to increased communications with others (Klug, 1995; Klug, 1996; Klug, 1997; and Klug, 1999). In other words, Scholars developed the flexibility needed to move between two very different sets of cultural norms (switching registers).

According to the Constructivist theory of learning as defined by Piaget (Flavel, 1970), the Scholars were able to create an expanded schema relative to how to succeed in academia as defined by Western cultural standards. Vygotsky (1978), also a Constructivist, would attribute this growth in understanding to socially-mediated instruction, i.e., learning supported by professors and others in the Scholars' environments. From an examination of the data, it is clear that this transformation has been a result of both internally and externally supported structures.

Changes for Native American Participants in the Knight Scholar Program

Communication and other skills

For Knight Scholars, transformations have been primarily in terms of (a) their abilities to see themselves as learners capable of succeeding in the 'White Man's World" and (b) understanding their own and the macro cultures. In terms of the first area, understanding that they as Native Americans could succeed in educational settings, several factors were involved. First of all, traditional cultural wisdom and ways of teaching and knowing affect the **Mental** or cognitive area in the Native American worldview. Traditional teaching is done through modeling, or showing, children how to perform specific tasks. This teaching does not rely on language to convey concepts to be learned. In fact, silence is considered an important ingredient in the formula for learning. Words are considered sacred and are not to be used excessively. Western European teaching as practiced for several hundred years contrasts with this model as it relies on

lecture without modeling as well as isolated reading from books rather than oral literacy through storytelling to transmit information (Klug, 1996).

Previously, Knight Scholars had perceived barriers to communication with their professors in academic settings. Native participants perceived a lack of willingness on the part of Euro-Americans to learn about them and their cultures. This led to difficulties in Natives' understandings of Euro-American expectations and why procedures were created that had to be followed in ways different from their own Native cultures (Klug, 1995). Understanding the importance of meeting deadlines and class attendance was necessary. Relying on the written word (which could "lie") rather than oral tradition was also a major challenge for Scholars.

The development of cross-cultural communication skills was a necessary precursor to becoming successful accademically. However, the Scholars had to be assured that the risks of becoming bicultural would outweigh the personal risks to be taken. The Yakama Tribal Council and others in the Scholars' environments including family, friends, and teachers, provided the necessary support for the Scholars to take these risks (Klug, 1995; Klug, 1996; Klug, 1997; and Klug, 1999).

Comments made by participants speak eloquently to this support from family and community:

> All of the interviewees ...related special challenges that they had in completing their programs. They commented about family, and that while it was difficult to break through the traditional roles for Yakama women and men, they were determined to do so in order to reach their goals. "Trying to walk both paths" when one had been brought up in a traditional way was very difficult. And yet, these participants were doing so, many for the first time.

> This understanding of non-Indian education is reflected in the college work of participants, which includes getting high grades. Scholars are very proud of their success. As one (n=1) participant expressed it, "The grades are high and it feels good to hear my family, my mother especially, talk so well about me."

In 1996, it was reported that over the previous year one of the elders had spoken positively of Heritage College in the Longhouse. He urged members of the Yakama Nation to take advantage of what Heritage College had to offer them. He talked about their American Indian heritage, and that "Heritage College was (their) heritage."

Personal challenges to overcome

Throughout the five-year period, the Scholars addressed their personal challenges regarding overcoming addictions to drugs and/or alcohol, living in non-supportive family environments, and difficulties with breaking from traditional roles as defined by their cultures. These challenges are presented in the text below.

Balancing school, work and home responsibilities

During the first year, many Scholars commented that an area particularly difficult for them was to be able to maintain the "balancing act" in the lives. For these participants, attending college meant they were breaking from the tradition of working only so that they could provide for their families' immediate needs. Many of the interviewees had jobs which paid at or slightly above minimum wage levels. In addition, they had carried

on the traditional roles in their families. In the case of the female participants, this meant taking total care of the children, grandchildren and homes. For the men, this meant being engaged in reading books to acquire knowledge rather than involvement in activities associated with the behaviors of "warriors".

Female interviewees related how difficult it was to be able to convince other members of their households that they needed to assist with the housekeeping. By the end of the five years, participants were relating how much more self-reliant their family members were at home, and that they felt their family members had grown by taking on household responsibilities (1999).

One of the male participants related that he had encountered a man a couple years before (Klug, 1996) who told him that "books were the new weapons". Keeping this in mind, he was able to feel he was making the right choice by continuing his education. This individual became a very positive role model for his students, and is teaching in a school where he has great respect from both Natives and non-Natives alike. This individual is presently enrolled in a Masters of Education program focusing on Administration.

Addictions

Several of the pa.ticipants talked openly about their early lives and how alcoholism had been a problem (Klug, 1995; Klug, 1996; Klug, 1997; and Klug, 1999). On reservations and in surrounding areas, alcoholism has been a persistent problem since the days of earliest European contact. Even though there may be medical explanations for the debiliating effects of alcohol on indigenous populations, the fact remains that alcoholism has contributed greatly to the breakdown of the family and of cultural systems.

Scholars involved in the Knight Program had determined to leave their addictions behind. They found that success in an endeavor which led to greater financial opportunities, as well as to a more secure future and increased self-esteem, assisted them in their determination to adhere to their commitments of abstention from alcohol. In addition, these individuals felt that they were, in effect, giving a gift to their children/grandchildren by remaining sober (Klug, 1997). In this way, Scholars' would be able to continue perpetuating the traditions of their tribal heritages by being physically able to do so.

One of the participants also shared that her husband was now treating her better as she had been able to remain sober, and that she was also receiving more respect from her children (Klug, 1999). This was indeed a positive transformation for this Scholar.

Knight Scholars were able to see the negative effects of addictions on the youth population. Scholars felt their successes were a way to encourage youth to understand they could take different paths in their lives.

Understanding Expectations in European Classrooms

Colleges and universities in the United States, like other educational institutions, are organized along Western European lines. Students are expected to engage in learning activities, question teachers if they do not agree with what is being said, question what they are reading and engage in their own research, develop their own understandings of

what "truth" is, and make eye contact with their instructors when they are involved in communicating with them. Of course, all of the above is contrary to the Native American cultural norms.

The following quote demonstrates this concept:

> An example that was given by one (n=1) participant was that of an English critique class. Yakama do not criticize each other outright. So her understanding of what was required for the class was very different due to cultural misunderstandings. After receiving two failing grades, one of the other students took her aside and explained to her what was required for the class. That student continued to act in a caring way and as a friend throughout the course of the semester.

One of the great difficulties for Knight Scholars was being able to feel free to engage in discussion and answer questions openly in the classroom. It took great courage for Scholars to ask questions if they did not understand materials or assignments. Understanding the "why" of how things were done when rules or routines did not make sense to them was also a challenge.

As these Scholars were preparing to become teachers, they had encountered many of the same mis/non-understandings in the public schools. Many of these individuals were employed as para-professionals, and had experiences of trying to assist Native American parents understand White rules when there didn't seem to be any explanations they themselves could understand.

One example of this occurred with a Scholar who had lost a family member during a summer session. The Scholar continued to attend classes, even when she couldn't concentrate on her work and felt guilty because she was not involved in the traditional mourning processes. This Scholar then proceeded to take the course exam and failed. During no time did she inform the instructor that a family member had died, as most European American students would have done (Klug, 1996). After the instructor was informed by a person working with the Knight Scholar Program (following the interviews conducted for this evaluation), the instructor was more than willing to work with the student. In the past, many students who experienced similar difficulties would have just dropped out of the program. Their failure would have been attributed to lack of competence rather than lack of understanding a different culture's rules for behavior.

Two years into the Knight Scholar program, participants began to share their first attempts at making contributions to class discussions. This was a particularly frightening activity for Scholars as they were doing something totally different from what they would have done in their own cultures.

Several of the students who have completed their undergraduate degrees are now enrolled in Masters programs. These individuals know that not only do they have the academic abilities to succeed at the graduate level, but that they are making important contributions to their Native and non-Native communities.

Knowledge of Cultural Heritage

Yakama youth have in recent years become more involved with gang activities and less knowledgeable about their own heritage. Very few individuals knew and spoke the native language of Sahaptin fluently. Sahaptin was beginning to be taught when the Knight Scholar Program came into being. Almost to a person, the Scholars expressed

thankfulness that the language was being taught at the tribal school (Klug, 1995; Klug, 1996).

Learning the Sahaptin language seems to be key to the cultural identity of the Yakama people. Scholars felt it was important to teach the language to their students, and began active study of the language. In addition, Scholars began to work with youth to assist them in learning traditional arts and ceremonies (Klug,1996; Klug,1997; Klug, 1999) .

The Knight Scholars themselves were caught initially between two worlds: the traditional world of the Yakama people and the "Modern" world of those who had become bi-cultural. For those had become bi-cultural, there was the problem of facing criticism for giving up their traditional duties. For women, this meant taking complete care of the home and children. As it was explained by one participant (n=1), once a young woman (even as young as twelve) had a baby, her job became to raise the child. This meant that girls were expected to drop out of school and stay home to nurture their offspring. In reality, many of these young women then became part of the cycle of abuse and poverty. One of the jobs of Knight Scholars working in the Head Start programs and Teen Parenthood Programs was to convince the girls' grandmothers that they should be allowed to continue schooling so that they could provide beiter support for their children..

Before becoming part of the Knight Scholar Program, very few of the participants would have thought it was appropriate to speak to the grandparents about letting their grandaughters continue schooling. Doing so at the end of their college experience at Heritage showed that they had made internal changes regarding the value of education and understood that education and culture need not be antithetical to each other (Klug, 1999).

Changes for Heritage College

Creating an atmoshere of respect

The first evaluation of the Knight Scholar Program took place in June, 1995. At first, the participants were unsure of what their comments might mean for the future of the program. As a general rule, when Native Americans have been requested to comment on programs in the past, their responses have gone unacknowledged and nothing was changed. The participants' engagement in the interview process was a very important test of the sincerity of those involved in the program at Heritage College.

In 1996 when the evaluator again interviewed Knight Scholars, it was apparent that some of the initial mistrust of the program had been ameliorated. The concern about whether or not Heritage College would really try to meet the needs of the students seemed to have been answered. One (n=1) of the Scholars noted that it was through the dedication and respect of the personnel in the Division of Education that the Knight Foundation program was succeeding, and that she wished "there were more people like them" in education (Klug,1996). The evaluator was able to continue with this important work precisely because the faculty at Heritage had made changes based on the first evaluation. This action produced a feeling of mutual respect between the Scholars and the College which allowed the development of the program to continue.

The importance of the creation of this atmosphere and its contribution to the willingness of the participants to engage with the evaluator cannot be overlooked. Because of this atmosphere of trust, participants continued to convey additional information which was not divulged during the previous interview sessions each succeeding year. With Native Americans, actions, not words, are what counts.

One of the first things participants related to the evaluator in 1996 was about the recent garden that had been planted on the campus. This garden was planted and blessed by representatives of the Yakama tribe. The blessing included a smudging ceremony, where the people attending were smudged with cedar, a holy ritual in American Indian culture. The individual sharing this information expressed how important the ceremony was, and how surprised and grateful she was to see "even the secretaries" attend the ceremony. By allowing, and encouraging, everyone at the College to participate in the ceremony, the European-Americans were demonstrating their respect for the Yakama culture.

The interviewee added that it had been cloudy before the ceremony, had cleared for the ceremony, and then had rained immediately after the ceremony. This was perceived as a true sign of the Creator's blessings upon the earth and the work of Heritage and the Scholars (Klug, 1996).

The following comment from a Knight Scholar exemplifies this point:

> Another area which was mentioned by a participant (n=1) was that of the inclusion of the aspect of spirituality in their programs. As Indian people do not separate daily living from spirituality, this has been a very important aspect of the program. Having ceremonies at the College performed by Indian leaders has made the participants more at ease in the College environment. (Klug, 1995)

An additional piece of information garnered through several interviews concerned a particular English class taught by a professor who was not willing to work with the American Indian students. The students felt this class would be nearly impossible for them to complete. This information was conveyed to Heritage College Knight Foundation program officers, and the situation was remedied. A new professor willing to work with the American Indian students was hired and now teaches this class. From interviews with several participants, it was made clear that Knight Scholars felt capable of completing the requirements for the class with the willingness of the new professor to provide additional assistance when needed (Klug, 1996).

Summer Indian Education Institutes

Heritage College provided summer institutes for teachers who wanted to learn more about ways to reach Native American students in the classroom as part of the work of the Knight Scholar Program. Knight Scholars took an active role in the planning of the institutes, and they also made presentations to the assemblage. This role was taken very seriously by the Scholars, and they were proud (as well as nervous) of the contributions they made to cross-cultural understandings.

In addition, several of the Scholars made presentations to local, regional, and national groups concerning education for Native American students. This was an important step for the Knight Scholars as they participated proactively in advocating for education appropriate for indigenous students.

College professors and relevant pedagogy

Another area that affected the Knight Scholars positively had to do with their professors in the Division of Education. During all of the interviews, Scholars mentioned particular professors who had made them feel comfortable, capable, and that they had important information to contribute in their classes. Professors consciously asked participants to share their views on such topics as childrearing practices and language instruction.

Most of all, the professors "connected" with the Scholars by relating to them in a more culturally relevant way. Scholars not only attended the College; in their classes, they also contributed information about their cultures. Individuals involved with the Knight Scholar Program also made it a point to ask participants about other aspects of their lives, and to provide advice on areas outside of the academic setting if necessary. Most of all, they took the time to listen and engage participants in a non-judgmental fashion, so that even if they were not members of the same ethnicity, they were able to respect the Scholars and their ideas. In effect, European Americans as well as the Native coordinators for the program worked within the relationship worldview model (Cross, 1995). In doing so, a major paradigm shift occurred with those who operated under the Western European academic paradigm. The relationship model reflected what was important to the needs of the Knight Scholars as they pursued their degrees in higher education.

Indeed, the course instructors worked **with** the Scholars, not against them. The professors allowed the Scholars to experience success, and then were proud of them and for them.

The following exemplifies comments made by participants:

> One (n=1) student felt she had gained a greater understanding of how non-Indian teachers work differently than Indian teachers. Her perspectives have been broadened because of this. Another student (n=1) expressed that she "relates better with parents and kids". This scholar stated she can use her education and skills she has developed in her position as a para-professional. Still another Scholar (n=1), who has now graduated and is teaching full-time, expressed that he feels more confident in what he is doing. The program assisted him in understanding more about kids. (1997)

Resources for successful completion of degree requirements

While most colleges and universities are not involved in the book-lending business, one of the difficulties experienced by Knight Scholars was the ability to purchase textbooks for class use. Because of the poverty levels experienced by the majority of the participants, one of the questions for many after the first year of the program was whether they could continue financially because of the cost of textbooks (Klug, 1995).

This dilemma was brought to the attention of the faculty at Heritage College. A solution to the problem was sought, and difficulties with having resources for purchasing textbooks was not addressed in subsequent evaluations.

Access to technology presented an additional area of concern. Heritage College provided a learning lab which students could utilize for completion of class requirements. In addition, tutors were available to Scholars for assistance with assignments in various classes, such as math and English. This made a tremendous difference in the attitudes of

the Scholars as they felt Heritage was encouraging them to succeed in their programs by offering these services.

Program management

Whether by accident or design, the second year of the program was made significant by the hiring of one of the Knight Scholars to assist with the management of the program. This gesture by the College again sent a positive message to the Knight Scholar Program participants: Scholars were important and the College wanted to do more than simply collect their tuition. Even though there were differences in style of the Knight Scholars as contrasted with members of the macro-culture, the program and participants continued to make valuable strides.

Heritage College continued to show its commitment to the Knight Scholar Program and the needs of the Scholars by hiring others from the Yakama Nation to work with the program. Recently (2000), a search needed to be conducted for a new coordinator for the program. As there were no qualified applicants from the Yakama Nation who applied for the position, the search had to be extended to a larger population. The new director hired to continue the program is Native American, though not a member of the Yakama Nation.

Physical plant environment

An additional area addressed by Heritage College had to do with the way the physical environment reflected its welcoming of the Knight Scholars as part of the student body. During the first evaluation visit (1995), the researcher noted there was a booth in the student cafeteria selling "Big Chief" lattes. While lattes are not offensive, utilizing the term "Big Chief" to describe the size was. During the next year's visit, this booth was no longer operating on campus. Its departure was primarily due to lack of business, but no "Big Chief "lattes or other beverages so labeled have appeared since.

At the time of the researcher's first visit, there were no posters or other visuals that acknowledged the American Indian students on campus. On the second visit, it was noted that there were posters for Indian Health Services and others on the walls of the College buildings. The library also reflected more culturally congruent materials.

By the last evaluation visit in 1999, there were changes apparent even in the bookstore. Books for Native American children had been ordered for purchase by students along with books addressing children from other cultures. There were tote bags which reflected Native American designs, as well as coffee mugs and other items for purchase which incorporated Native American motifs (Klug, 1999).

Personnel

Another aspect of the campus that reflected acceptance of Native American students was the numbers of employees of American Indian heritage. Though some of these employees had worked at the campus during the first year of the Knight Scholar Program, it was apparent there had been a continued effort to employ tribal members throughout the college.

Difficulties

While the Knight Scholar program has been viewed as a great program by the participants, there have been some difficulties which have arisen. The first director had

been very motivational for the scholars. When he retired, his visits to school sites also stopped and the new director did not visit the site as frequently. Knight Scholars relied on this personal contact, and the contact was not always given. However, when interviewees voiced this concern, the faculty at Heritage did respond.

After the second year, weekly seminars were intitiated. Unfortunately, this has continued to be problematic. Because of work schedules and other obligations of the Knight Scholars, the seminars were not well attended. Various solutions have been attempted to remedy the problem, however there are still challenges to resolution of this problem.

Carry-overs to the work-place

Many of the participants were employed in educational settings in varying capacities: as para-professionals in the classrooms, school cooks, administrative assistants, and school athletic coaches. As with many other areas, because these individuals had been raised in a more traditional manner, they were unable to fathom some of the expectations in the workplace. As one participant explained, she is able to get along better with her colleagues since she understands now where her values and ways of doing things originate. This woman does not look Native American due to intermarriage with Europeans, however, was raised in a very traditional way. Now she and her colleagues can function much better in their shared environment (Klug, 1997).

The following, taken from the 1995 evaluation (Klug), exemplifies this dilema:

> It is important to note that deculturalization did not always provide the full separation from culture as it was meant to, and therefore automatic assimilation into European culture did not take place. In fact, except for those who then married European or were adopted by Europeans, rarely did this happen, even then incompletely.

This same individual is involved in hiring new teachers for her school district. As such, she feels that she knows now what characteristics to look for in those applying for positions in her district. An area that carries much more weight for her than previously is the amount of experience the candidate has had with diverse populations in his/her teacher preparation program.

Other Knight Scholars who worked as para-professionals in classrooms commented throughout the years that they understood better what needed to be taught and how to teach material. They also were able to speak the "same language" with the teachers with whom they were working. This has led to increased acceptance in the schools as well as better relationships with the teachers. Teachers have also learned from them because of the information being acquired in classes at Heritage.

In several cases, the Knight Scholars found they were actually being mentored by teachers with whom they had been working either as para-professionals or as individuals completing course assignments in the schools. These informal mentors were providing encouragement to the Knight Scholars and shared in the feelings of pride generated by the Scholars' success (Klug, 1999).

Increased opportunities for advancement

Even before graduating from Heritage College with a degree in Education, several of the Knight Scholars found they were being offered advances in their present positions. Two (n=2) of the Schoars had become Head Teachers for Head Start programs where they worked. One (n=1) individual advanced through several different positions by the time she finished her program. As she said, she had quadrupled her salary from the time she began as a Knight Scholar. This advancement also had positive effects with other areas of her life as she now had the financial means necessary to provide for herself and her family (Klug, 1999).

Commitment to Education

An additional area to consider is the role these Scholars are able to play in providing a bridge between cultures. The Scholars have found they act as "interpreters" between two worlds many times, both formally in terms of their employment and informally in terms of questions which arise outside the school setting. This is especially important considering their roles in the community and the modeling they can provide for indigenous peoples in becoming participants in the macro-culture while retaining their native cultures.

The Scholars are also determined that their own children and grandchildren will attend schools of higher education and obtain their degrees. There is no doubt that this goal will be achieved, as several of the children and grandchildren are now involved in higher education (Klug, 1999).

Insights into the thinking of Knight Scholars as they matriculated through their programs provide understandings of what the students must face when they enter higher education institutions:

> Because of the linkage the program has granted between the two worlds, the program has provided a "window" to the non-Indian world for participants (in school). Three (n=3) of the Scholars stated that they can now see how history and English have their places, whereas before they couldn't put the pieces together. Not only were they able to succeed in these courses, but the Scholars could look beyond the mere requirements for taking them and actually understand why the courses would help them in their teaching. This understanding unlocked a door for the Scholars to a room through which they could perceive a broader view of the world of "knowledge" in the Western sense. The Knight Scholars knew that this room was all right for them to enter; in fact, they were being encouraged to do so. The Knight Scholars knew then that Western education was not simply for Europeans, but for them also. Once the door to understanding was unlocked, the students never perceived their learning in the same way. As stated by one participant:
>
> > The overall feeling was why go to school? Why should we go to school or not? There was so much feeling of rebellion. You're not supposed to ask questions of your elders: you listen and learn. We didn't have school before the Europeans. Words were never wasted. You need to know what you need to do. Words are energy! Don't need to waste it! Words are the weapons of the Europeans. (Klug, 1997)

Summary

In summary, it can be stated that the Knight Scholar Program has been very successful in accomplishing the goals to (1) prepare members of indigenous cultures to become successful teachers in the public schools; and (2) to assist candidates in

understanding and addressing the unique problems confronting Native American students in K-12 settings.

In order to accomplish these goals, changes have been made by both participants and Heritage College. Through accomplishing these goals, the College has lived up to its promise to provide educational opportunities to members of the Yakama Nation. In doing so, opportunities for educational success have also been provided for Native American students in elementary and secondary school settings.

Analysis of the data indicates that program participants:

- view themselves as "transformed" in many ways by their educational experiences
- have gained confidence in their own expertise and experience
- are a determined group of individuals who want to "make a difference"
- believe they have a significant role to play as role models for American Indian youth
- feel better prepared to bridge the cultural gap between school and community
- express considerable concern about alcoholism, drugs, early dropout and gang activities among their youth
- are concerned about preservation of their native language and culture
- have become committed to the concept that American Indian people must provide the leadership in American Indian education.

Recommendations for Future Study

The study can serve as a replicable model for those who work with culturally diverse students to address the impact of unplanned cultural oppression within education systems. It offers relevant information to those especially who work with non-dominant culture candidates who will in turn work with non-dominant cultural children in a synergistic, culturally consonant way. It documents the transformation of those who had felt disempowered to a position of empowerment as novice professionals in their field of choice.

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